

Appl. No.: 10/518,947
Reply to Office Action of: 11/21/2006

REMARKS

Claims 1-10 have been allowed.

Claims 11 and 12 were rejected under 35 U.S.C. §102(b) as being anticipated by Drescher et al. (US 6,213,795). The examiner is requested to reconsider this rejection.

"A claim is anticipated only if each and every element as set forth in the claim is found, either expressly or inherently described, in a single prior art reference." *Verdegaal Bros. v. Union Oil Co. of California*, 814 F.2d 628, 631, 2 USPQ2d 1051, 1053 (Fed. Cir. 1987). It is submitted that Drescher fails to teach each and every element as set forth in claims 11 and 12 for at least the reasons described below.

Applicants have amended claim 11 to recite, *inter alia*, "wherein the bearing tab is configured to be received by the bearing sleeve when the bearing tab is inserted into the bearing sleeve in the direction of plugging". In contrast, Drescher merely discloses a two-part electrical connector 10 comprising a housing 16 having a pivot aperture 72 and a lever 58 having a pivot pin 62, wherein the pivot aperture 72 receives the pivot pin 62. Pivot aperture 72 is a cylindrical thru hole which only has open ends in the direction perpendicular to the direction of plugging (see Figs. 1-6). The pivot pin 72 cannot be received by the first housing 16 or the pivot aperture 72 in the direction of plugging. Therefore, in Drescher, the pivot pin 62 is configured to be received by pivot aperture 72 when the pivot pin 62 is inserted into pivot aperture 72 in the direction perpendicular to the direction of plugging. Thus, Drescher fails to teach

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a lever having a bearing tab and a guide tab "wherein the bearing tab is configured to be received by the bearing sleeve when the bearing tab is inserted into the bearing sleeve in the direction of plugging and wherein the guide tab is configured to be insertable into the slot in the direction of plugging", as claimed in amended claim 11. Accordingly, claim 11 is patentable over the art of record and should be allowed.

Applicants have amended claim 12 to recite, *inter alia*, "wherein the first housing comprises a bearing sleeve and a spring arm, ... wherein a free end of the spring arm extends to a side of the bearing sleeve... and ... wherein the free end is configured to resiliently deflect and secure the bearing tab within the bearing sleeve". In contrast, Drescher merely discloses a two-part electrical connector 10 comprising a housing 16 having a pivot aperture 72 and a lever 58 having a pivot pin 62, wherein the pivot aperture 72 receives the pivot pin 62. Pivot aperture 72 is a cylindrical thru hole which receives the pivot pin 62 with a snap fit (see col. 3, lines 24-25 and Figs. 1-6). Drescher does not disclose or suggest utilizing a spring arm to secure the pivot pin 62 within the pivot aperture 72 or the housing 16. Even if a spring arm were suggested, since the pivot aperture 72 is a cylindrical hole, the pivot aperture cannot be open to the back side of the housing and a free end of the spring arm could not extend to a side of the pivot aperture. Thus, Drescher fails to teach a "connector arrangement comprising ... a bearing sleeve and a spring arm, wherein the bearing sleeve is open to the back side of the first housing, and wherein a free end of the spring arm extends to a side of the bearing sleeve ... and ...

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wherein the free end is configured to resiliently deflect and secure the bearing tab within the bearing sleeve" as claimed in amended claim 12. Accordingly, claim 12 is patentable over the art of record and should be allowed.

For all of the foregoing reasons, it is respectfully submitted that all of the claims now present in the application are clearly novel and patentable over the prior art of record. Accordingly, favorable reconsideration and allowance is respectfully requested. Should any unresolved issue remain, the examiner is invited to call applicants' attorney at the telephone number indicated below.

Respectfully submitted,

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2/12/07
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